

Sheep Shearing Shed
South side of Moneta Access Road from U. S.
Route 20/26, .3 miles east of Moneta
Moneta Vicinity
Fremont County
Wyoming

HABS No. WYO-53

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WYO,
7-MONA,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D. C. 20005

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7-MONA,
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. WYO-53

SHEEP SHEARING SHED

Location: South side of Moneta Access Road from U. S. Route 20/26
.3 miles east of Moneta, Fremont County, Wyoming.
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: (USGS Moneta
Quadrangle Map) 12.279030.4782030.

Present Owner: The Matador Cattle Company.

Present Use: None.

Statement of
Significance: This was one of the first mechanical sheep shearing sheds
in Wyoming and an excellent example of the "Australian
system" of sheep shearing.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: ca. 1917.
2. Architect: The architect is unknown. It seems likely, however, that J. B. Okie gave instructions to an itinerant carpenter, J. T. Freeman, on the construction of the sheds.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Legal description of property: Northeast 1/4 of Southwest 1/4 of Section 23, Township 37 North Range 91 West.

1917 Bighorn Sheep Company
1935 Walter Graham
1955 William Clark
1958 Merriam Company
1958 Ben Roberts
1964 Matador Cattle Company
4. Original plans and construction: Although the original plans for the Moneta Sheep Shearing Shed are not available, it is clear that they were based on an Australian model. Australian sheds were designed to shear several hundred sheep a day and thus had the capability to both shear and disbatch the wool from a single convenient place.
5. Alterations and additions: The only changes have been the removal of the mechanical sheep shearing equipment and the removal of some doors and windows.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

John Brognard Okie was a wealthy Wyoming sheep rancher and merchant who was both affluent and powerful. He was so successful that by the end of the Nineteenth Century he built a home in Lost Cabin, Wyoming at a cost of \$100,000 and owned a second luxurious home in Denver, Colorado. Early in the Twentieth Century he traveled to Australia and was impressed by the sheep shearing sheds there. Upon his return to Lost Cabin he built "Australian system" sheds in Lost Cabin, Armino, and Moneta. The "Australian system" brought all the sheep into one room where they were put into pens of five sheep each. There was a swinging door at the back of each pen and as the shearer finished shearing the animal he would push it down a chute which led to a lower level. The animals were counted and inspected on the lower level before returning to their grazing grounds. The wool was packed and weighed for shipment.

This shed and others like it served ranches for many miles around and remained in use until the late 1950's when rancher's found it more profitable to shear their own animals.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Fremont County, Abstract of Titles for Township 36 and 37,
Fremont County Courthouse, Lander, Wyoming.

Jensen, Henry, native of Lysite and Wyoming sheep historian,
interview on July 2, 1973 at Lysite, Wyoming.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Larson, T. A. History of Wyoming. Lincoln: University of
Nebraska Press, 1965.

Prepared by John Paige
Project Historian
National Park Service
Summer, 1973

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: There are few buildings of this type

in the United States and this is one of three such structures in Wyoming which were built as an adaptation of typical Australian sheep shearing sheds.

2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: This building, T-shaped and approximately 64' x 91', is raised three feet above the surrounding flat site.
2. Foundations: Concrete piers supporting the posts.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Posts with intermediate 2 x 6 studs covered by five-inch horizontal drop siding painted red.
4. Structural system, framing: 2 x 6 posts at four feet on center with 2 x 6 rafters over sheep pen room and modified scissors trusses at five-feet-six-inches on center over wool storing room.
5. Porches, stoops: Wooden ramps from sheep holding pens up to sheep pen room are located to the east end of the north side. A loading dock is located on the west side.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Sliding, X-braced barn doors are located on the north at the ramps to the sheep pen room and at the loading dock to the wool storage room. Entrance doors are located at the ramp to the sheep pen room and into the office and machine rooms. These are low openings from the lower crawl space to the sheep pens on the east. The doors are no longer located on these openings.
 - b. Windows: Openings in upper walls are closed by solid wooden panels which hinge at the bottom.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof with corrugated metal sheets overlapping.
 - b. Dormers, cupolas: There is a roof ventilating cupola in the center of each of the two ridges. In addition there are numerous skylights.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plan: There are two major rooms in the building. The room forming the leg of the "T" is the shearing and wood storage room. The room forming the bar of the "T" is the sheep holding pen room. At the meeting of the two rooms on the south side is located an entrance and machine room, and, on the north side an office.
2. Stairways: Due to the raising of the building three feet above grade there are short stair runs located in the south entrance area and the machine room, in addition to the exterior steps to the dock and the office.
3. Flooring: The sheep pen room has half-logs approximately four inches in diameter spaced at five inches on center. The shearing and wool storage room, office, and machine room has three-and-one-quarter inch tongue and groove pine flooring.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Unfinished.
5. Doorways and doors: There are numerous swinging gates into the various sheep holding pens in that room. In addition there are three gates which are raised by pulley. There are small double-leaf swinging doors from each of the individual pens in to the shearing room. These doors, of which there are ten sets, each have two recessed panels.
6. Trim: None.
7. Notable hardware: None.
8. Mechanical equipment: Although there is none at this time, there was originally an engine which operated a vacuum system that picked up the sheared wool and directed it into bags for tying and shipment.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Located approximately three-tenths of a mile east of Moneta, Wyoming, the building is on the south side of the Moneta access road from U. S. Highway 20-26. The area is sparsely settled flatland of sagebrush and prairie grasses in central Wyoming.
2. Outbuildings: Numerous corrals and pens surround the building.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were made during the 1973 Wyoming Project undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Wyoming Recreation Commission. During the project, records were made on twenty-eight (28) individual subjects and six (6) historic areas.

This project was under the general supervision of John Poppeliers, chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Supervisor was Professor J. William Rudd, Architect, of the University of Cincinnati. Project Historian was John Paige, Oklahoma State University. The measured drawings were prepared by John Uhler, University of California at Berkeley, Architect; and Student Assistant Architects Richard Duflocq, University of Cincinnati, Clayton Fraser, University of Tennessee, and Richard Wyatt, California Polytechnic University at San Luis Obispo. Jack E. Boucher, HABS staff photographer, provided the photographic record. This report was edited for HABS in 1977 by Candace Reed.

ADDENDUM TO:

~~MONETA~~ SHEEP SHEARING SHED
Moneta Access Road, *Moneta Vic.*
Freemont County
Wyoming

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